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in the failure of his mission and his capture. We also desire information on his treatment and interrogation in the Soviet Union during the entire period he has been under the control of the Soviet Union.

4. Since Mr. Powers' capture on 1 May 1960, this Agency has continuously worked toward the release by legal means of Francis Gary Powers. In this connection, we have worked with the Department of State and provided various types of support, including the preparation of legal briefs and working closely with civilian lawyers who worked diligently and long toward his release. This Agency has maintained Mr. Powers in a pay status and has made various provisions for the welfare of his wife. In regard to

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eighteen months, we cannot be sure what his attitude would be to an exchange and his return to the United States, but his latest letters to his wife, which we have seen, indicate hope for his release and concern that the United States Government is not taking action which he believes would achieve his freedom.

5. In connection with efforts toward the release of Francis Gary Powers, the idea of an exchange of Powers for Colonel Abel has been again considered as a serious possibility since the wife of Colonel Rudolf Abel has raised the subject in a series of letters which she has written to President Kennedy and her husband's lawyer, James Donovan, in New York. The most recent letter from Mrs. Abel, which states that for the second time she has been to the Russian Embassy in Berlin, contains a key paragraph which reads as follows:

> "I gathered from our (Mrs. Abel - Russian Embassy) talk that there is only one possible way to achieve success, that is simultaneous release of both Francis Powers and my husband, which can be arranged."

If, as we suspect, Mrs. Abel's letters are being written or guided by Soviet officials, this letter appears to open the door for direct negotiations on an exchange. It is the desire of this Agency

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that this avenue of communication and negotiation with the Soviet Union be continued and the release of Francis Gary Powers from the Soviet Union should be pressed for by this Government through negotiation.

6. We realize that the release of Powers at this time through these particular negotiations must be weighed against the release of Colonel Abel. While Abel has maintained complete silence on his role within the Soviet intelligence apparatus, it is a fact that Colonel Abel was, and probably continues to be, an important cog in that apparatus. His release at this time, when he has served only a portion of his sentence, would be of value to Soviet intelligence. On balance, however, we believe the national interest would best be served by the return of Powers even at the cost of Abel's release.

[redacted]

L. K. [redacted]
General, USAF
Acting Director

OGC/MCH:slw (20 Oct 61)
Rewritten: 27 Oct 61
Retyped third page 3 Nov 61
Distribution:
Orig & 1 - Addressee via OGC
1 - DCI
1 - DDCI
1 - DD/P
1 - [redacted]
1 - [redacted]
1 - DDS
1 - [redacted]
1 - [redacted]
1 - [redacted]
1 - [redacted]
3 - OGC

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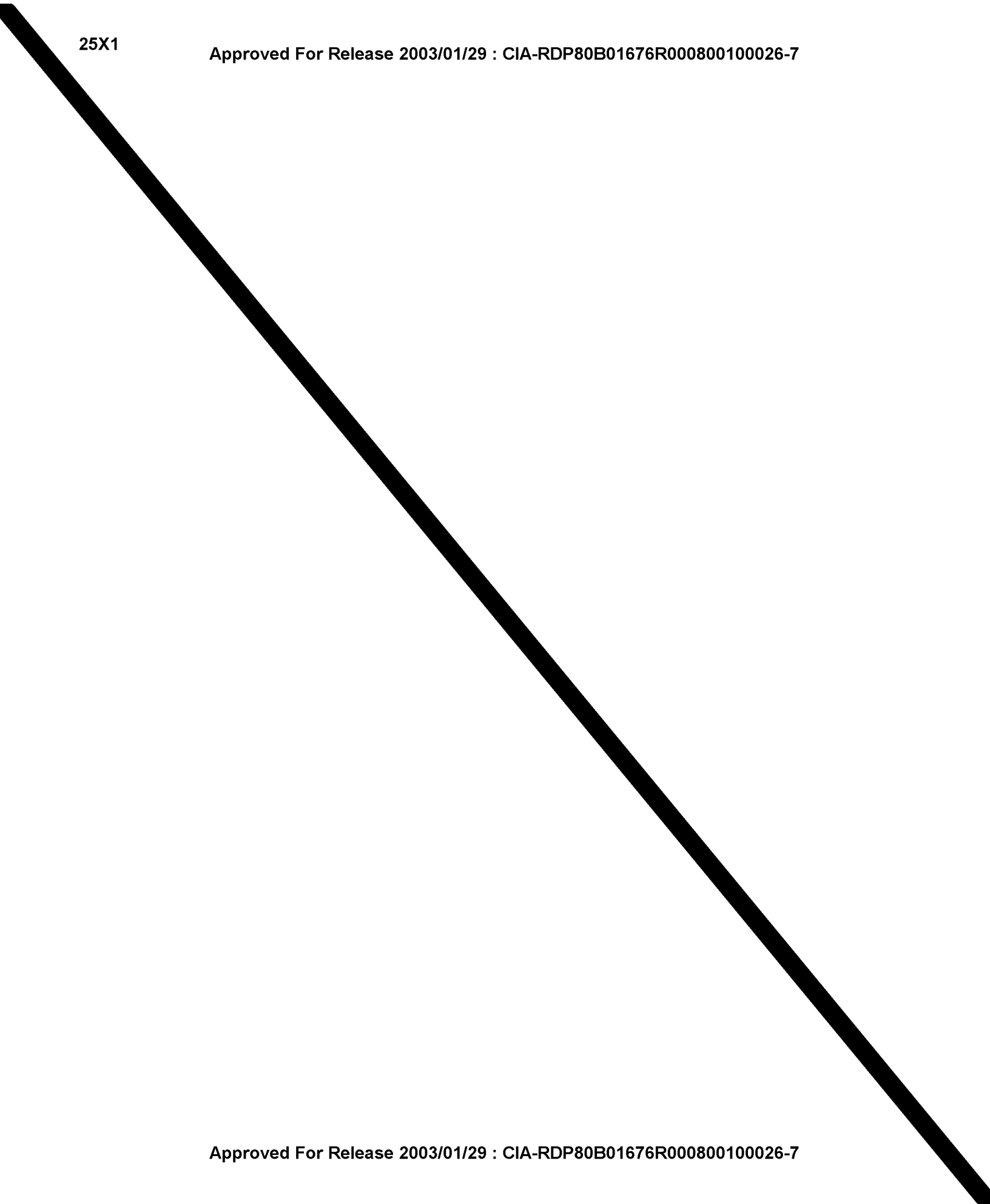

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2 NOV 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Dean Rusk
The Secretary of State
Washington 25, D. C.

SUBJECT: Powers - Abel Exchange

1. Francis Gary Powers, who is under sentence in the Soviet Union for violation of Soviet espionage laws, is under contract to the Central Intelligence Agency. He was apprehended by Soviet forces while on a prescribed mission for this Agency. After a thorough investigation based on the information available to us, we have concluded that Mr. Powers had carried out his duties as directed and, even though captured, has continued to conduct himself in a responsible manner. As far as we can determine, he has generally followed his instructions while a captive and has not communicated significantly damaging prohibited intelligence information to his Soviet captors. Therefore, this Agency is responsible to seek Francis Gary Powers' return to this country by all available means, as soon as possible.

2. While the Soviets may feel that they have fully exploited the propaganda to be gained from Powers' capture and trial, there is reason to believe that he has not disclosed to them information relating to the national interest which could be further exploited. Included is information concerning third-country overflights of a nature which could still be embarrassing to this Government.

3. From an intelligence and air operational standpoint, this Agency is most interested in interrogating Mr. Powers to learn the precise events which transpired on the first of May 1960 which resulted in his capture. He can furnish this Agency with technical information concerning his flight, behavior of the aircraft and the precise reasons for the failure of the aircraft which resulted

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